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REVIEWS OF BOOKS

The Study of History in Schools; Report to the American Historical Association by the Committee of Seven: ANDREW C. MC LAUGHLIN, Chairman ; HERBERT B. ADAMS, GEORGE L. FOX, ALBERT BUSHNELL HART, CHARLES H. HASKINS, LUCY M. SALMON, H. MORSE STEPHENS. (New York : The Macmillan Co. 1899. Pp. ix, 267.)

THE newer school studies are slowly taking on what may be called an "educational form." Out of their wealth of material a selection is being made and arranged in order of presentation, logical and psychological. Some day there will be substantial agreement upon these matters not only as to history, but as to geography, the mother-tongue, the modern European languages and the natural sciences as well. Greek, Latin and mathematics have been tempered in the furnace of experience until they have an educational form which, whether good or bad, is well recognized and easily followed. The subjects which have more recently entered the course of study are in a quite different position. They have yet to acquire an accepted educational form.

The newer subjects are likely, in course of time, to have this advantage over the older ones: their educational form will have been arrived at by reflection and comparative study, and not merely by a process of more or less instructive experience and of more or less faithful imitation. It is to be asked, for example, of each claimant for a place in the school, why should this subject be studied in school at all; what is its relation to our insight into our civilization and our individual and collective effectiveness; what are its points of contact with human interests and with other subjects of study; on what principle is its material to be selected for teaching purposes; how is this material to be presented; what is its relative value, and what share of time and of emphasis are its due? When these questions are satisfactorily answered we not only arrive at an educational form for our subject, but we understand the grounds and the limitations of that form.

Writers of history would never succeed in giving to it an acceptable educational form. One may read Droysen's *Grundriss der Historik*, Goldwin Smith's *Lectures on the Study of History*, Freeman's *Methods of Historical Study*, and Bishop Stubbs and Lord Acton on the study of history, and while gaining inspiration, enthusiasm and a wealth of ideas, remain as far from the knowledge of the best educational form for history as before. That knowledge must come and can only come from the

labors of the student of education itself and from those of the skilled and reflective teacher of history, acting together. This condition has been met in the preparation of the volume under review.

The general character and contents of the book, the method of its preparation, its aim, and its unusual importance were all referred to in the AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW for October last (pp. 157-158), and that statement need not be repeated here. Like the other large undertakings of similar character, the suggestion which led to the preparation of this report came from the National Educational Association, which has in recent years become the most powerful agency for expressing as well as for stimulating the best educational thought of the country. The report itself was undertaken by the authority of the American Historical Association. It aims to have, and it has, direct practical value for the student of education and for the teacher of history. It is not the first piece of work of its kind, but it is the most thorough, the most carefully prepared, and the broadest. The report of the Madison Conference on history, civil government and political economy to the Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies (1893) is valuable and very suggestive ; and the discussion of the aims and methods of teaching American history in the *Report of the Committee of Fifteen on Elementary Education* (1895), while brief, is philosophical and distinctly helpful ; but the present report is clearly of a higher type than either of the others, whether judged by its method, by its scope, or by its conclusions.

The period of study covered by the report is avowedly that of secondary education. It is assumed that American history, the natural point of departure in historical study for American pupils, has been studied for three or four years in the elementary school : therefore the interesting and difficult questions arising there are not touched by this report. European experience was before the committee in ample detail ; and the studies of Miss Salmon, Mr. Haskins and Mr. Fox of history-teaching in the typical secondary schools of Germany, France and England, respectively, are of permanent interest and value.

What, then, is the point of view of the report ? Does it, like so many disquisitions on elementary and secondary education that bear the signatures of eminent scholars and university teachers, invert the educational pyramid and make the college course and, most of all, the college entrance examination the test of what and how the secondary school should teach ? This crucial question may be unhesitatingly answered in the negative. The writers of the report have consciously avoided that danger, and they have studied the needs of secondary school students on their merits. It is asserted, first, that history is an integral, not an accidental or ornamental, part of the secondary school course, and that its study should be continuous. These are incontrovertible propositions. It is asserted, also, that each of the four secondary school years should be given a block or period, and that the four blocks or periods should be studied in this order: (1) ancient history, with special reference to Greece and Rome, (2) medieval and modern European history from

about 800 A.D. to the present time, (3) English history, and (4) American history and civil government. This is a good order. The fact that the seven members of this committee agree in recommending it, makes it probable that it is the best. It reveals a natural sequence of events, and it admits of a correlation between history and the other school subjects. The reading of the Greek and Latin classics, or such of them as are found in the first two secondary school years, will aid and be aided by the study of ancient history in the first year. The literature of the second and third years should help and be helped by the history of those years. American history in the fourth year carries the pupil over the field of his elementary school work from a new and higher point of view, meets—as far as it is wise to meet—the desire for some intensive study, and admits of ample application to the fundamental principles of economics and of civil government. All the possible objections to this sequence of blocks or periods that are mentioned by the committee or that have occurred to the present reviewer, are reducible to bad teaching ; and that no course of study can either provide for or guard against. The purpose of the committee in framing just this course is admirably stated in this paragraph :

“ We ask, then, for a course in history of such length that the pupil may get a broad and somewhat comprehensive view of the general field, without having, on the one hand, to cram his memory with unrelated, meaningless facts, or, on the other hand, to struggle with generalizations and philosophical ideas beyond his ken. We think that a course covering the whole field of history is desirable, because it gives something like a proper perspective and proportion ; because the history of man’s activities is one subject, and the present is the product of all the past ; because such a study broadens the mental horizon and gives breadth and culture ; because it is desirable that pupils should come to as full a realization as possible of their present surroundings, by seeing the long course of the race behind them ; because they ought to have a general conspectus of history, in order that more particular studies of nations or of periods may be seen in something like actual relation with others. We think, however, that quite as important as perspective or proportion are method and training, and a comprehension of the essential character of the study ” (pp. 48, 49).

Having laid out this four years’ course of study, the report next proceeds to offer suggestions for the treatment of each of the four periods. These suggestions are uniformly practicable, helpful and sound. They reflect correct theory tested by experience. The presentation of the matter of method in instruction is equally good. What is said of textbooks, supplementary reading, written work, occasional tests, notebooks, maps, and the use of a reference library can hardly be improved. The chapter on “ Sources ” is eminently sane. The idea that boys and girls of tender years can learn history by “ investigating sources ” is grimly humorous ; fortunately its spread was checked in the United States before it had done much harm. This report advocates the use of a limited amount of the material known as “ sources,” always in connec-

tion with a text-book. Used in this way, the "sources" become simply so much well-selected illustrative material and are of marked assistance in vitalizing the teaching.

Finally, the committee arrive at the topic of college entrance requirements, with the too often attendant examination,—

Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum.
What is said here is well said. The wrong of shaping secondary school courses with reference to college needs instead of *vice versa*, the folly of rigidity in college entrance requirements and consequently, too often, in secondary school work, and the importance of revising and improving the examination in history where it still exists, are all pointed out. The scheme of "units" proposed is moderate and practicable.

This report is so excellent that two chapters of it ought to be still better. These are the chapters on the value of historical study and on the need of trained teachers. The former chapter only hints at the influence of historical study in cultivating the imagination and the moral sensibilities, and passes over entirely its great significance in laying the foundations for a true institutionalism, a view of the world which sees at once the place and the limitations of individualism. It fails, also, to lay sufficient emphasis on the immense significance of ideals, individual and national, as revealed by history, always a fruitful lesson for the young pupil especially during the adolescent period. Similarly, the chapter on the need of trained teachers is inadequate. "Some instruction in the methods of teaching" (p. 118) is not enough. Some study of education as a process is required, and also some considerable knowledge of the characteristics of the human mind and character at the volcanic period of adolescence with which the secondary school has to do. It is a false ideal to picture a teacher with a knowledge of history, a knowledge of the books which are the tools of his trade, and "some instruction in the methods of teaching," as a trained teacher. That day has gone by in the elementary schools; it is going by in the secondary schools; it will go by in the colleges.

But the report is worthy of the highest praise. It ought to do a great service to the cause of sound education in America. Every school library, every teacher of history, every superintendent and secondary school principal ought to have it at hand for constant study and reference.

NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER.

The History of Mankind. By Professor FRIEDRICH RATZEL. Translated from the second German Edition, by A. J. BUTLER. Vol. III. (London and New York : Macmillan and Co. 1898. Pp. xiii, 599.)

THIS third volume completes the translation of Ratzel's comprehensive work. While it admirably supplements our manuals of history it is not a history but a treatise on ethnography. Two maps are given that serve their purpose well, and also emphasize the need of others as well